



**500.67 Explorer Program**

**Number Series:** 500 - Operational

**Sheriff's Approval:** Digital

**Approved Date:** February 2, 2019

**Review Due Date:** February 2, 2022

**Review Frequency:** 3 years

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**POLICY**

The Hendry County Sheriff's Office has established Explorer Post 642. The goal of this program is to provide young adults aspiring to become law enforcement officers, basic knowledge of law enforcement operations. Members of the Sheriff's Office Explorer Post 642 are not sworn deputies.

**PROCEDURE**

**I. General Guidelines**

- A. The Explorer Program provides opportunities for the youth in Hendry County to include:
  - 1. Work and train in different areas of the sheriff's office to help the Explorer gain practical knowledge and experience in law enforcement.
  - 2. Engage in activities that offer assistance to the sheriff's office and the community.
  - 3. Help youth mature, and prepare them to become responsible adults.
  - 4. Explorers and Advisors shall adhere to the National Explorer Constitution.
  - 5. Explorer Post 642 is a member of the Boy Scouts of America, and adheres to the principles established for the Boy Scouts of America's Explorer Programs.
  - 6. The By-Laws established by Explorer Post 642 will be in accordance with the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, and will be consistent with the sheriff's office policies and procedures.
  - 7. Membership shall be limited to twenty-five (25) persons.

**II. Explorer Program Eligibility Requirements**

- A. Eligibility requirements of the explorer applicant will include the following:
  - 1. Between the ages of 14-21, and completed the eighth grade.
  - 2. No felony arrests or convictions. Misdemeanor arrests and convictions will be considered on a case by case basis.
  - 3. Must exhibit good discipline at the academic institution they are enrolled in, with no out of school suspensions or expulsions.
  - 4. No drug or alcohol usage.
  - 5. Must submit a copy of their most recent report card (2.0 or higher and no failing grades).

6. Complete HCSO Explorer application and subsequent documentation.
7. Complete an Oral Board review. The Oral Board will consist of the Post Officers and Senior Advisor.
8. Pass any physical test requirements as set forth by the Explorer Advisory Board.
9. All applicants shall be physically able to perform the duties and responsibilities as set forth for Explorers.

### III. Explorer Program Responsibility

#### A. Explorers responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Must be enrolled in an academic institution.
2. Maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average, or 2.5, if holding the rank of sergeant or higher on a 4.0 grading scale, with no failing grades.
3. Maintain a standard of conduct, as set forth by the Explorer Program and the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.
4. Maintain good discipline at the academic institution they are enrolled in, with no out of school suspensions or expulsions.
5. Maintain regular attendance at their academic institution.
6. Attend Explorer Post meetings weekly.

#### B. Advisor and volunteer responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Maintain professional mentoring relationship with the Explorers.
2. Be a positive role model.
3. Shall adhere to HCSO Code of Ethics.

#### C. Senior Advisor

1. Will be a Certified Law Enforcement Officer, and may appoint an associate Advisor to assist him/her.
2. Has the authority to veto, without exception, any plan, function, act, or any other matter that arises, which may cause conflict with office policy, or post By-Laws.
3. Is responsible for the administrative functions including, but not limited to:
  - a. Annual Explorer evaluations.
  - b. Special duty requests / assignments.
  - c. Disciplinary actions.
  - d. Training.
  - e. Record retention.
  - f. Accounting for any NON-SOLICITED donations through the Treasure of the Post.
  - g. Following guidelines for Proficiency Awards.

### IV. Rank Structure

#### A. The Post Advisor will appoint five officers as follows:

1. **Major** – Post President
2. **Captain** – Vice Post President
3. **Lieutenant** – Secretary
4. **Sergeants** – Squad Leaders (2)

### V. Explorer Duties

- #### A. Explorers are not commissioned a sworn status and are not sheriff's office employees; their duties are limited to:

1. Assisting with volunteer projects in the community.
2. Conducting fund raising projects for the Explorer Program, and other charitable programs, supported by the sheriff's office, under the direction of Explorer Program Advisors or their designee.
3. Assisting sheriff's office personnel with logistical support at public events under the direction of the Explorer Program Advisor or their designee.
4. Explorers will not be allowed to operate sheriff's office vehicles.
5. Explorers will not be allowed to act in a manner of a sworn deputy at any time.
6. Explorers interacting with the public will represent the sheriff's office in a courteous and professional manner.

#### **V. Uniforms and Use of Issued Equipment**

- A. Explorers will comply with established guidelines for the issuance and wearing of uniforms while conducting duties with the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.
- B. The Senior Advisor shall determine the prescribed attire to be worn by Sheriff's Explorers during various activities.
- C. The Explorer uniform shirt will differ from that of a Certified Law Enforcement Officer, as to distinguish them from sworn members, and will be purchased by the Explorer Post funds.
- D. Explorers will only use issued equipment in a manner consistent with training, and only involved in Post activities.
- E. Explorers utilizing an agency radio shall adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Hendry County Sheriff's Office policies and procedures.

#### **VI. Training**

- A. Explorers will receive initial training on the operation of the explorer post.
- B. Explorers attend weekly, basic law enforcement training, to enable them to assist the Hendry County Sheriff's Office in their daily duties and times of emergencies.
  1. Explorers will be trained in traffic, first aid, radio communications, firearm safety, patrol techniques, report writing, building searches, tactical first aid, disaster preparedness, and other patrol techniques as deemed appropriate by the Senior Advisor.
  2. Explorers may expand their training by attending Local (Bi-Annual), State (Delegates, Quarterly), Regional and National Conferences / Competitions. These conferences / competitions are designated to test the Explorers in practical law enforcement response techniques, and compete against other Explorer Posts for individual post recognitions.
- B. Training is every Monday, as designated by the Senior Advisor, unless otherwise stated by the Senior Advisor or Associate Advisor. Explorers are advised of the following prior to attending scheduled training:
  1. Uniform of the day (dependent upon training for that day),
  2. time
  3. location

## **VII. Explorer Ride Along Program**

- A. The Explorer Ride Along Program provides Explorers with firsthand knowledge of basic law enforcement operations. The program will supplement classroom training through observation of deputies during their performance of patrol functions.
- B. The Explorer Ride-Along Program is an incentive based privilege. In order to qualify for participation in this program, the following requirements must be met:
  - 1. At least 16 years of age.
  - 2. Active member in good standing for six months or longer.
  - 3. Certified in CPR, with training in first aid.
  - 4. Have demonstrated a working knowledge of ten codes, radio signals and explorer directives, through written examinations and practical situations.
  - 5. Must attend an approved Explorer Academy.
- C. Any active Explorer wanting to participate in the Explorer Ride-Along Program shall present a permission form signed by the Senior Advisor and their parent or legal guardian. The Explorer Advisor must pre-coordinate all Explorer Ride-Alongs with the on-duty Shift Commander or designee.
- D. Explorers will ride only with deputies selected by the Shift Commander or designee.
- E. While involved in the Explorer Ride-Along Program, Explorers will not carry or use weapons and will not operate a sheriff's office vehicle.

## **VIII. Financing**

- A. The Explorer Post will be financed independently of the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.
- B. Monetary donations for services and/or fund raising projects performed by the post, will be the property of Explorer Post 642 .
- C. Funds received by the post will be held to cover specific expenditures at the discretion of the majority of the membership.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Explorer** – any exploring member of the Hendry County Sheriff's Office

**Florida Sheriff's Explorer Association (FSEA)** – hosts quarterly training, which is labeled as delegate's weekend. Every quarter the Explorers may attend "Delegates" for training in different regions of Florida.

**Law Enforcement Explorer Academy** – is a week-long education program providing Explorers with practical, hands-on law enforcement and life-skills training. The academy is presented in a structured and highly disciplined environment, much like that found in police or military recruit training centers. Instruction and supervision is provided by Instructors from local law enforcement agencies, along with staff.

**Leadership Weekend** – is an overnight weekend event providing Explorers with practical, hands-on leadership and law enforcement career skills training. Career officers from area law enforcement agencies will provide instruction and supervision. The training is developed to be educational, challenging, and a fun experience for the Explorers. This program will consist of

participation in leadership and team building activities, a four hour session of instruction on a specific skill, and a simulated test.

**Learning for Life** – is a subsidiary of the Boy Scouts of America, National Exploring Program, supporting youth serving organizations in their efforts toward preparing young adults to successfully handle the complexities of today’s society and to enhance their self-confidence, motivation and self-worth.

## REFERENCES

State/Federal Regulations:

Florida Sheriff’s Explorer Association (FSEA)

CFA:

N/A

Forms:

N/A

Other Policy/ Procedure References:

300.22	Employee Dress Code and Uniform Regulations
400.00	Professional Standards
500.02	Telecommunications
700.07	School Resource Officer
800.00	Code of Ethics